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STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION OF EFFORTS TO STUDY, MITIGATE AND MINIMIZE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CHERNOBYL DISASTER

Letter dated 9 October 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the appeal of the Government of Ukraine to the Governments of the nations of the world concerning scientific, technical and financial support in establishing and developing the activities of the International Scientific and Technological Centre for Nuclear and Radiological Accidents (see annex).

I should be most grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 20 (c).

(Signed) Anatoli M. ZLENKO
Ambassador
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ANNEX

[Original: Russian]

Appeal by the Government of Ukraine to the Governments of the nations of the world concerning scientific, technical and financial support for the establishment and activities of an International Scientific and Technological Centre for Nuclear and Radiological Accidents

We shall soon mark the tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, which in terms of its scale, its impact on the environmental situation and its socio-economic consequences reached far beyond Ukraine and became a global issue of our time. Ukraine experienced the full tragedy of the nuclear disaster and understands the concern of public opinion all over the world regarding the continued operation of the plant.

With this in mind, the Government of Ukraine has taken a crucial decision on the possibility of decommissioning the Chernobyl nuclear power plant by the year 2000. Ukraine is, however, in no condition to implement such a wide-ranging programme since it entails enormous economic expenditure.

Unfortunately, owing to various political and economic circumstances, during the nine years that have elapsed since the Chernobyl disaster it has proved impossible to establish an effective system for making a systematic study of all its consequences. Moreover, the unwillingness even of industrially developed States to react appropriately and to take effective countermeasures to deal with the consequences of this global misfortune has been amply demonstrated.

In view of the foregoing, the Government of Ukraine deems it extremely important, in the interests of all mankind, that a thorough and in-depth study should be undertaken of the lessons of the Chernobyl accident and of how its consequences could be dealt with so as to avoid a repetition of similar disasters in the future and mitigate significantly the consequences of potential incidents at nuclear power plants. The unique conditions and features of the Chernobyl zone provide an opportunity for the working out of practical approaches, the formulation of measures designed to prevent nuclear accidents, and the development of special technologies to minimize and eliminate the consequences of nuclear and radiation accidents, clean up environmental contamination, decommission nuclear installations, and so forth.

In order to create proper conditions for research work by specialists from interested States and international scientific centres on the implementation of scientific research programmes in the areas of nuclear and radiological safety, accident prevention, procedures for dealing with the consequences, and environmental clean-up, and also with a view to conducting radio-ecological and medical-biological research, the Government of Ukraine proposes to establish an International Scientific and Technological Centre for Nuclear and Radiological Accidents. The establishment of such a centre would make it possible to address a whole range of issues associated with preparations for and the subsequent

carrying out of the decommissioning of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, turning the "Shelter" unit into an environmentally safe system and resolving the question of how to deal with a considerable quantity of radioactive waste.

Having endorsed the concept of the establishment and activities of the International Centre - in which the interests of the Ukrainian side have been indicated - and wishing to create the most favourable conditions for multilateral cooperation within the scope of this centre, the Government of Ukraine hopes to receive suggestions regarding the orientation of scientific research, the organization of work and the participation of representatives of foreign States in its activities.

On the eve of the tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the Government of Ukraine requests the Governments of all States of the world, international organizations and financial institutions, and the directors of research centres and laboratories - all those concerned about the fate and future of mankind - to take part in the establishment and activities of the International Scientific and Technological Centre for Nuclear and Radiological Accidents.